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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

DDI 4900-82
14 June 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

25X1 FROM: [REDACTED]
National Intelligence Officer for NESA

SUBJECT: Basic Trends in Lebanon Conflict

- The strength of the Palestinian guerrillas in Southwest Lebanon, including Beirut, has been seriously diminished. Without a Syrian presence, they would ultimately be controllable by an essentially Christian dominated central government and army. In the short-term, international forces are necessary to enable Israeli withdrawal.
- Syrian forces are now largely deployed in the central and northern Biqa valley, plus north Lebanon. This situation is tolerable for most concerned, and will probably continue.
- The possibility of permanently defusing the South Lebanon "flashpoint" -- a situation which has plagued our relations with all-including the moderate Arab states -- has been created.
- US association with Israeli actions has, in the short-intermediate range, further eroded our relations with the moderate Arabs, and rendered "strategic consensus" arrangements more distant.
- Israel has once again undertaken independent action [REDACTED] 25X1
[REDACTED] and assumes it will get away without repercussions. This continued behavior on Israel's part presents obvious long-term problems.
- The Palestinian movement, while weakened in the flashpoint area of southwest Lebanon, remains in existence. It has no plausible "raison d'etre" with the loss of access to Israel's northern borders, and hence may well be radicalized and return to terrorism internationally.

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2

- Muted Soviet reaction so far is probably due mainly to limited potential to affect military conflict, ambivalence about Syrian and PLO behavior, diffidence about US, and indecisive Politburo under ailing Brezhnev.
- Future Soviet actions will probably aim at increasing their military presence/influence in Syria and at gaining greater say in international diplomacy affecting area (a new Geneva conference).

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